CARSTENS PUBLICATIONS C37

STEAM IN THE ALLEGHENIES

WESTERN MARYLAND

ROSS GRENARD and JOHN KRAUSE

William P. Price

Exerting its 96,300 pound tractice effort to the fullest, 1111 roars up the Cash Valley on a September day in 1952. Ahead lies Helmstetter's Curve, Big Savage Tunnel and eventually the end of the line at Connellsville. With exhaust blasting, sanders spraying, and safety valve popping, Eng. 1111 portrays here most of what was impressive about the Western Maryland. Although the roar of black F-7's was soon to drown out steam, the 1111's quarter century battle against grade and tonnage will be long remembered by all who witnessed it.

STEAM IN THE ALLEGHENIES
WESTERN MARYLAND

ROSS GRENARD and JOHN KRAUSE

Featuring Photography by Robert F. Collins and William P. Price

Designed and Edited by John Krause and Ed Crist

ISBN 911868-37-2

Copyright © J&D Studios, Inc., Rockville Centre, New York 11570. All rights reserved. This book may not be reproduced in whole or in part except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews. Printed in the United States of America.

FRONT COVER: The 1117, one of the Western Maryland's monstrous Decapods, assaults the Alleghenies with another tonnage train bound for Connellsville. The rugged mountains wear a panache of autumn colors, symbolic of the waning days of steam power on the Western Maryland. Bill Price recorded the scene at Frostburg, Md. on October 15, 1952.

RIGHT: Earlier in the summer of the same year, the mountains were lush with greenery as a sister 2-10-0, the 1111, stormed the west side of the mountains. The train is approaching the Keystone viaduct that will carry the WM rails over those of its rival, the Baltimore & Ohio. Not only is steam gone, but even the rails of the Connellsville Subdivision have disappeared and today's tonnage moves over the B&O's line to Connellsville. The Western Maryland, once so fiercely competitive and independent, has now been submerged with its old rival into the blue, yellow, and vermillion uniformity of the Chessie System.

Carstens
PUBLICATIONS, INC.

William P. Price

Robert F. Collins

Bursting out of Knobley Tunnel and crossing the South Branch of the Potomac, the 1406 accelerates the 83 cars of WM-2 east towards their destinations. Although the 4-8-4 and her sisters are but five years old they have already built a notable reputation as freight haulers but this will avail the Potomacs not, as diesels drive them to an early grave. The 69 inch drivers are rolling the reefers at 50 mph on a bright September morning, and all the world seems right.

Introduction

In the years prior to its complete dieselization in 1954, the Western Maryland was one of the most impressive and photogenic railroads on the North American Continent, and there are valid reasons for considering it to be the most impressively photogenic in the Eastern United States. Certainly the B&O had the warmest personality, the PRR had the greatest volume, and the C&O had the widest locomotive variety, but when it came to the most varied operations combined with the most impressive scenery, one would have to give the award to the WM's three-state, 700-route-mile operation. While it never handled anywhere near the traffic volume of its neighbors, its trains did move with *élan*, its employees took an unmistakable pride in their railroad, and its service was valued by shippers ranging from Bethlehem Steel to feed mill operators of relatively minor status. Its officers took as much pride in the physical and mechanical condition of their locomotives as they did in the ratings accorded their senior securities by Moody's and needless to say, both ranked quite highly.

The Western Maryland has passed forever from the scene and, though its corporate existence is maintained, it is for all practical purposes but an operating district of the 12,000 mile Chessie System. Railroading is in a constant state of evolution and the once proud Western Maryland is today submerged into the yellow, vermillion and blue of its new master, just as the WM itself once absorbed many smaller railroads.

By the 1930's the WM had established itself by reason of strategic location and connections as a major carrier of coal and merchandise into the Northeastern United States. Styling itself "The Fast Freight Line", it moved many merchandise freights bridging traffic from the B&O, N&W and the New York Central System to and from the Reading, and it was an active participant with the NKP, W&LE, P&WV, RDG, CNJ, L&HR and NH in the legendary "alphabet route".

Coal, both that originated and that received from connections, was the life blood of its existence, and this explained its motive power policy which embraced the steam locomotive almost to the very last.

Interestingly, the bulk of the WM's traffic having moved from west to east to Hagerstown then headed north to a connection with the Reading at Lurgan, Pennsylvania, on a line which eventually moved three times the traffic density of the original Baltimore-Hagerstown line.

It is incongruous that the heaviest traffic on the WM came to be moved over lines whose existence was not even contemplated by the railroad's incorporators or by those who, starting in 1852, constructed the earliest trackage. Their intent had been to connect the farming communities of Carroll and Frederick Counties with Baltimore and later with Hagerstown and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. This operation was less than remunerative, and the line survived for a number of years largely because of financial aid given by the City of Baltimore. In 1884 connections reached the B&O at Cherry Run and the Reading near Chambersburg. These link-ups, coupled with a Norfolk & Western connection at Hagerstown, vastly increased the coal tonnage, and set the pattern for the future flow of traffic.

In 1902 George Gould was seeking to create a transcontinental system and, acting through the Fuller Syndicate, he entered into negotiations for the purchase of the Western Maryland in which as a result of the largesse granted the struggling line, the City of Baltimore had become the majority stockholder. The Baltimoreans righteously indignant over the recent acquisition of *their* Baltimore & Ohio by the Pennsylvania Railroad which was the chosen instrument of their arch-rival Philadelphia, were delighted with this golden opportunity to make their city the eastern terminus of Gould's system. The sale was consummated on May 24, 1902, and work soon began on the ocean terminal at Port Covington, the extension from Cherry Run to Cumberland, and a general upgrading of existing tracks and facilities.

In 1905 the West Virginia Central & Pittsburgh was merged into the WM system, providing access to the coal fields in the Cheat Valley, and in 1907 the $7,000,000 Cumberland Extension was completed. But, like the rest of the Gould System, the WM collapsed into receivership when revenues proved to be insufficient to service the funded debt created to pay for the improvements. Faced with the determined opposition of the Harriman interests and the Pennsylvania Railroad, as well as the machinations of Kuhn, Loeb & Co., road after road was lost to creditors and eventually Gould retired to Europe. Emerging from receivership on January 1, 1910, as the Western Maryland Railway, and with the Rockefeller interests firmly in control, its first order of business was to commence construction of the Connellsville Extension. This was completed in 1912 and gave the WM the shortest route between the Midwest and the Atlantic and the easiest crossing of the Alleghenies. Soon an active interchange was established at Connellsville with the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie and after 1931 with the Pittsburgh and West Virginia.

With its Western outlet secured, the management embarked upon a policy of acquiring short lines in order to add their coal traffic to that which it already hauled. Some of the more notable ones included the Somerset Coal Railway Company and the Fairmont-Bingamon both of which had to be reached over B&O trackage rights; the Chaffee Railway, which was the operating bailiwick of the Western Maryland's famed Shay; the Cumberland & Pennsylvania, which will be covered later in these pages; and most impressively, the Greenbrier Cheat & Elk, once a Shay-powered logging line linking Elkins with some of the richest coal deposits in West Virginia. As a consequence of this merger, the WM acquired both the glory of operating to the highest point reached by a common carrier east of the Mississippi and the burden of lugging coal out of Webster Springs and Bergoo over 3 percent grades and around 30 degree curves.

During the consolidation fervor of the 1920's there were several efforts, mostly abortive, to annex them to various railroad systems, but little came of them save the B&O's purchase of a 42 percent interest in the company, looking towards control. This was opposed by both the WM and the federal government, a compromise was eventually reached which required the B&O to place its WM shares with Chase National Bank as trustee. This preserved the independence of the line for at least 40 years. In 1972, however, the B&O, by then a subsidiary of the Chesapeake & Ohio, successfully set the trust aside and converted the WM into a wholly owned subsidiary.

It is as impossible to separate the Western Maryland from its history as from the topography through which it operates for the road is the product of both. Over the last years of steam the WM came to rely largely upon locomotives of exceptional size and tractive effort to move its traffic. While it prided itself on its fast freight operations, the nature of its terrain precluded the speeds of, say, the Nickel Plate. Rather it refined its terminal operations to eliminate dead time and moved its manifests in a manner which anticipated the run-through freights of the 1970's. Blessed with little more than a token passenger service, it concentrated both its operational and mechanical expertise on serving its shippers and this paid off most handsomely.

The WM's locomotives were intended to carry out this mission by developing tractive effort beyond the theoretical capacity of their wheel arrangement. Its H-9 2-8-0's, constructed in 1921 and 1923, developed 71,500 pounds tractice effort, had feedwater heaters, stokers, and 12-wheel tanks, and were used all over the road. Weighing in at 309,910 pounds, they exerted more tractive effort than some of the immense 4-8-2's constructed for the Rio Grande at the same time, and their dimensions were exceeded only by some of the consolidations of the D&H and Reading. The I-2 2-10-0's, delivered in 1926, were primarily intended for service between Ridgely and Connellsville. Most powerful of all Decapods, they packed a 104 square-foot grate area between their rear drivers; this can be compared to 100 square-feet on the contemporary T&P 2-10-4's.

In 1940 the WM purchased its first freight locomotives with trailing trucks: twelve 4-6-6-4's, which with the Rio Grande's L-105's shared the distinction of being the only Challengers constructed by Baldwin. Developing 95,500 pounds tractive effort, they were intended to increase freight train speeds between Hagerstown and Connellsville. Unfortunately, they were to be plagued with riding problems, track pounding and a clearance overhang which resulted in their being the first of the modern power to be retired. Nonetheless, they were impressive engines and

lugged many a ton of freight over Sand Patch.

In the early postwar years the WM received what turned out to be two notable "last one"! from Lima and one from Baldwin. In the former case, the last Shay built was delivered from Lima in 1945 as WM No. 5 to serve for several years on the Chaffee Branch. In the latter case, Baldwin delivered twelve 4-8-4's, dubbed "Potomacs", to expedite tonnage between Hagerstown-Cumberland and Hagerstown-Rutherford. Developing 70,600 pounds tractive effort and roughly 5,000 drawbar horsepower, they increased train speeds and earned the admiration of their crews. These, the last 4-8-4's constructed by Baldwin, were powerful, burly, capable of holding their own with first generation diesels and destined to die young.

Despite the Western Maryland's obvious attractions and relative proximity to the population centers of the Northeast, very few fans visited it during the steam era and precious few of what pictures were taken have appeared in print. Because of a combination of light traffic, early dieselization, and attractions elsewhere, few photos seem to be available of either of the Hagerstown-Baltimore Lines. Consequently, this volume will concentrate on the lines radiating out of Cumberland, Maryland. These lines had the heavy traffic, steep grades, and rugged scenery that provide an excellent backdrop for a look at the Western Maryland's impressive roster of steam power.

In doing this we will show an uncommon operation, completely atypical of Eastern railroading, which many assume to be composed entirely of multiple-track mains, electrification, incredible traffic volume, and numerous passenger trains. The WM may have had more in common with the Rio Grande than the B&O, for it certainly moved in a world far removed from population and urbanity. In fact, one of its active engine terminals, Spruce, West Virginia, was totally isolated from the outside world save by rail, a situation which makes even the outposts of the Colorado's narrow gauge seem urban by comparison.

For assistance received in the preparation of this book, the author would especially express his appreciation to the Western Maryland Historical Society and its curator, E. Roy Carpenter, Jr. and to Edward M. Cummings and Sid George of the Chessie System. All of these gentlemen responded graciously to many questions, and Mr. George was especially cooperative in detailing his experiences as Division Engineer at Cumberland, responsible for a territory which included both Sand Patch and Black Fork grades. At the same time, the Western Maryland Historical Society is to be commended for its efforts to preserve the heritage of this remarkable railroad. Its headquarters at Union Bridge, Maryland should be a mecca for all those who wish to learn more about the subject.

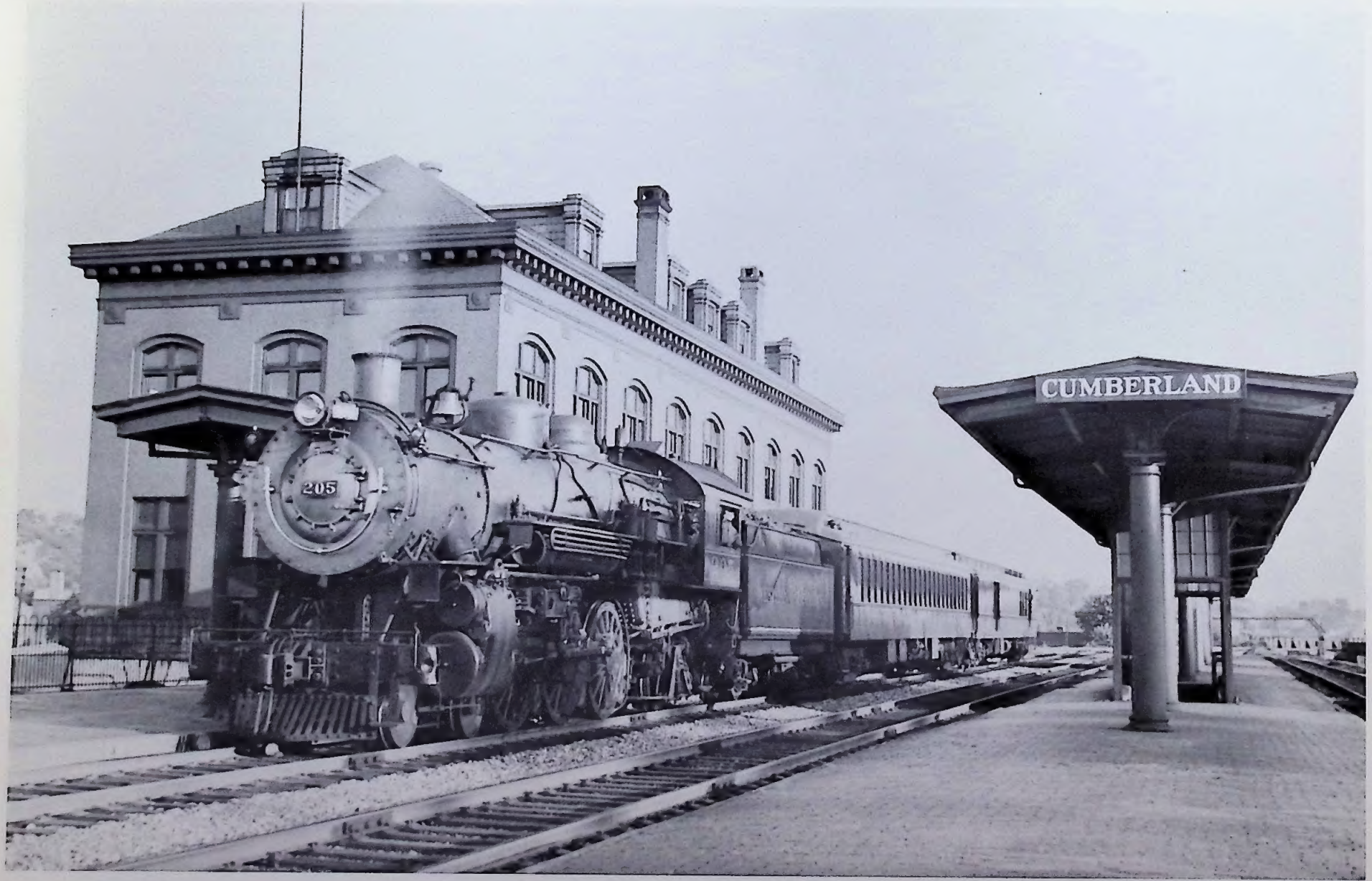
Much of the credit for the subject matter herein presented must go to the three photographers represented: William P. Price, Robert F. Collins and John Krause. Through their artistry the era of steam on the WM is preserved forever. In addition to his photographic skills, John encouraged the writer and printed the "glossies" of the pictures—both of which are essential to success. And an especial note of gratitude is due to my mother, Florence Grenard, who willingly endured the congestion and disorientation inherent in the process of writing.

Ross B. Grenard

Robert F. Collins

Table of Contents

Cumberland Detail Map. 9
Cumberland East 21
Durbin 29
Elkins and The Thomas Subdivision 34
Black Fork Grade 36
Connellsville Subdivision 54
Cumberland & Pennsylvania 79
Route Map 83



Robert F. Collins

Basking in the sunshine and shadows of a late summer afternoon, the 205 stands hard by the Cumberland passenger station. The 1912 Baldwin has brought Train 10 from Elkins over one of the most spectacular rides anywhere and now awaits the coming of the hostlers. The red brick station, constructed by the West Virginia Central, is the hub of all WM activity in the area for it houses the dispatcher's office as well as those of the Elkins Division officialdom. It is here that we begin our journey into the past.

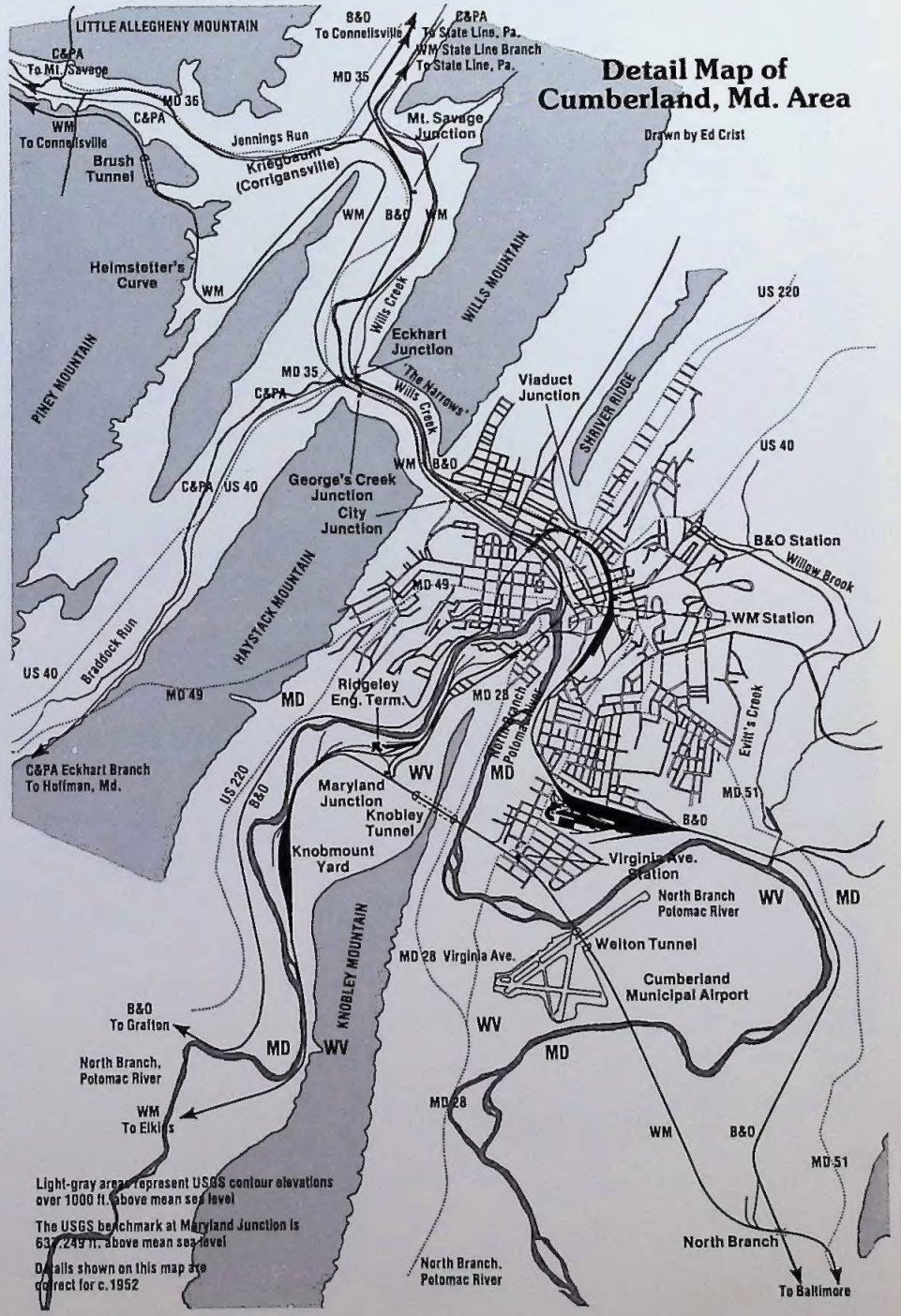
Cumberland has been a transportation center since the day in 1753 when George Washington constructed a fort there at the direction of the ill-starred General Braddock. Over the years, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, the National Road, the Baltimore and Ohio and finally the Western Maryland have passed this way. Located at the confluence of Wills Creek and the Potomac River, it has been both workshop and jumping off place for the changing forms of transportation over the years.

Robert F. Collins

LEFT: A few minutes out of the Cumberland station, Train 2 passes MY tower and heads east on the line to Hagerstown and Baltimore. Maryland Junction, as it is officially known, is the point where the lines to Elkins and Connellsville diverge and is flanked on the south by Knobmount Yard and on the north by Ridgeley and its engine servicing facilities. Immediately ahead of 209 in this 1952 photo is Knobley tunnel, and then the 65 mile journey down the Potomac Valley to Williamsport and Hagerstown.

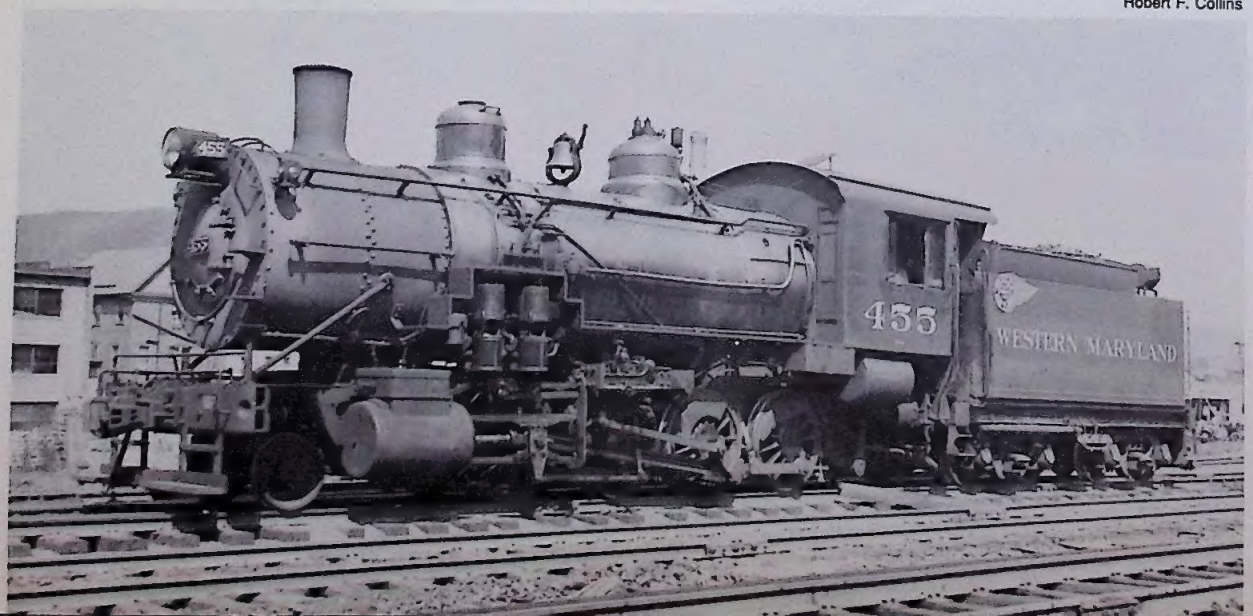
Robert F. Collins

The nature of the Maryland-West Virginia border is such as to make it almost indistinguishable between Cumberland and Ridgeley. A similar confusion often results about the local engine terminal which is variously described as Cumberland, Maryland Junction and Ridgeley. Here are H-9's 831 and 822 leaving Ridgeley with freight number 81 for Elkins and about to pass a caboose and a 4-6-2 awaiting assignment. In this Ides of March scene from 1952, spring has yet to come to West Virginia, but steam is very much in charge of the WM's tonnage.



William P. Price

Robert F. Collins



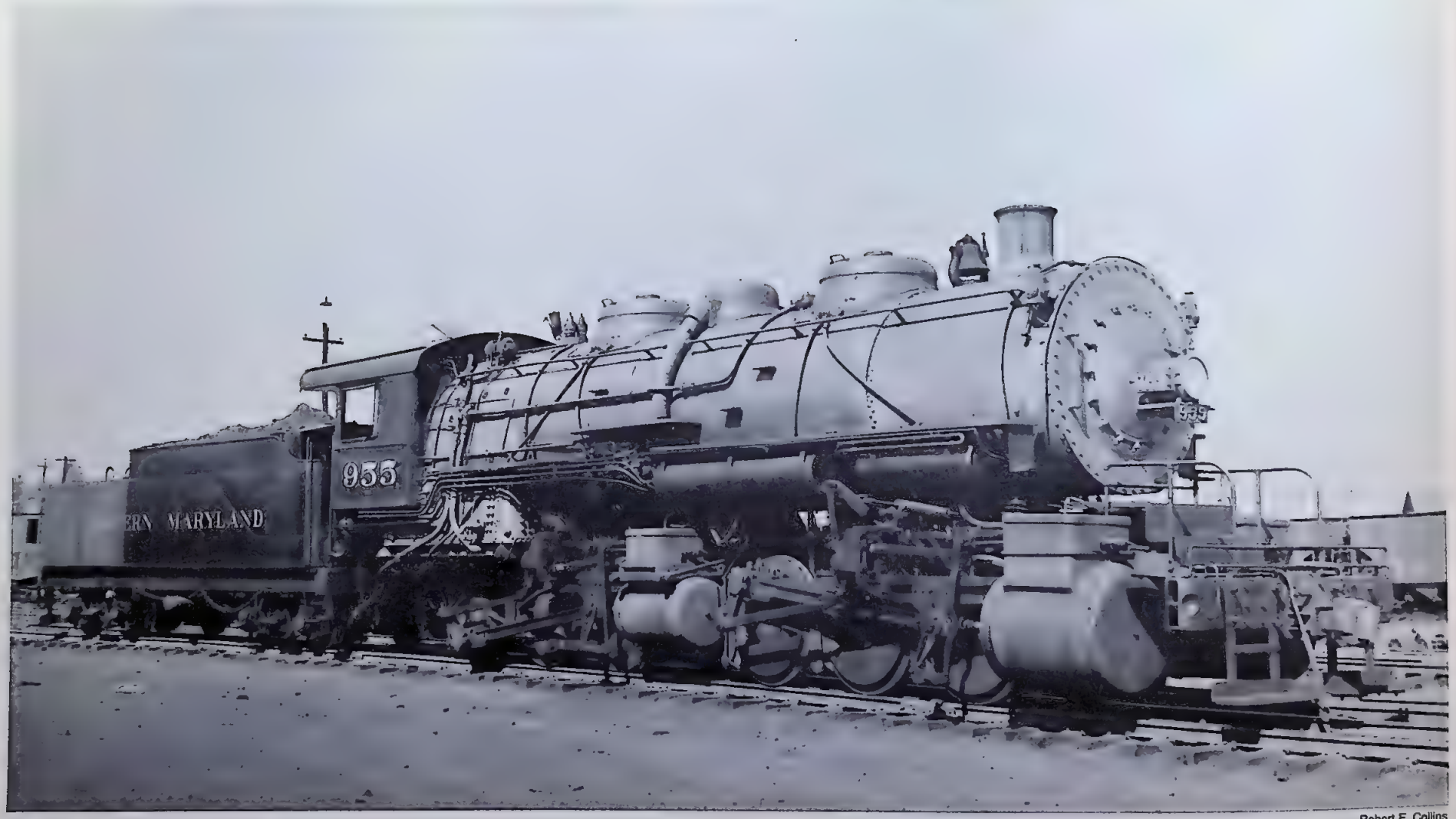
ABOVE: On June 25, 1952, Maryland Junction was an active engine terminal servicing steam engines of all sorts and sizes for both the Elkins and Hagerstown Divisions. The impressive line-up of power standing outside represented both active and inactive engines, since the capped stacks indicate that a goodly number are stored serviceable possibly due to encroaching dieselization, but more likely due to the precipitous drop in coal loadings occasioned by the nationwide steel strike.

The smallest and largest classes then active are represented by H-4b No. 455 on this page, and M-2 No. 1211 opposite. Both were Baldwins, both were designed to move tonnage over mountains, and both were then working out their final days.

LEFT: The 455, nee West Virginia Central & Pacific No. 44, was constructed in 1903 to develop an impressive 44,305 pounds of tractive effort. It was one of the few survivors of its class and was assigned to yard service at Cumberland in 1952, but was scrapped in 1953 after a long and useful life both as a road engine and switcher.

Robert F. Collins

ABOVE: The 1211 on the other hand, had a relatively short career, spanning only the years from 1941 to 1955 during which the class never quite lived up to its potential. Nonetheless, it was rugged, burly, and perhaps even photogenic power which introduced the high speed articulated to the WM. Intended to operate through from Hagerstown to Connellsville without change, they did so and were able to perform reasonably well on Sand Patch grade. Actually developing less tractive effort than the I-2's, they were constructed with 69-inch drivers in the hope that they would be easier on the track than the 61-inch drivered 2-10-0's. This didn't prove to be the case, and after the delivery of the Potomacs they were rarely assigned to high speed territory. They did, however, introduce the red and gold winged fireball herald which was to become standard on all freight power tenders.



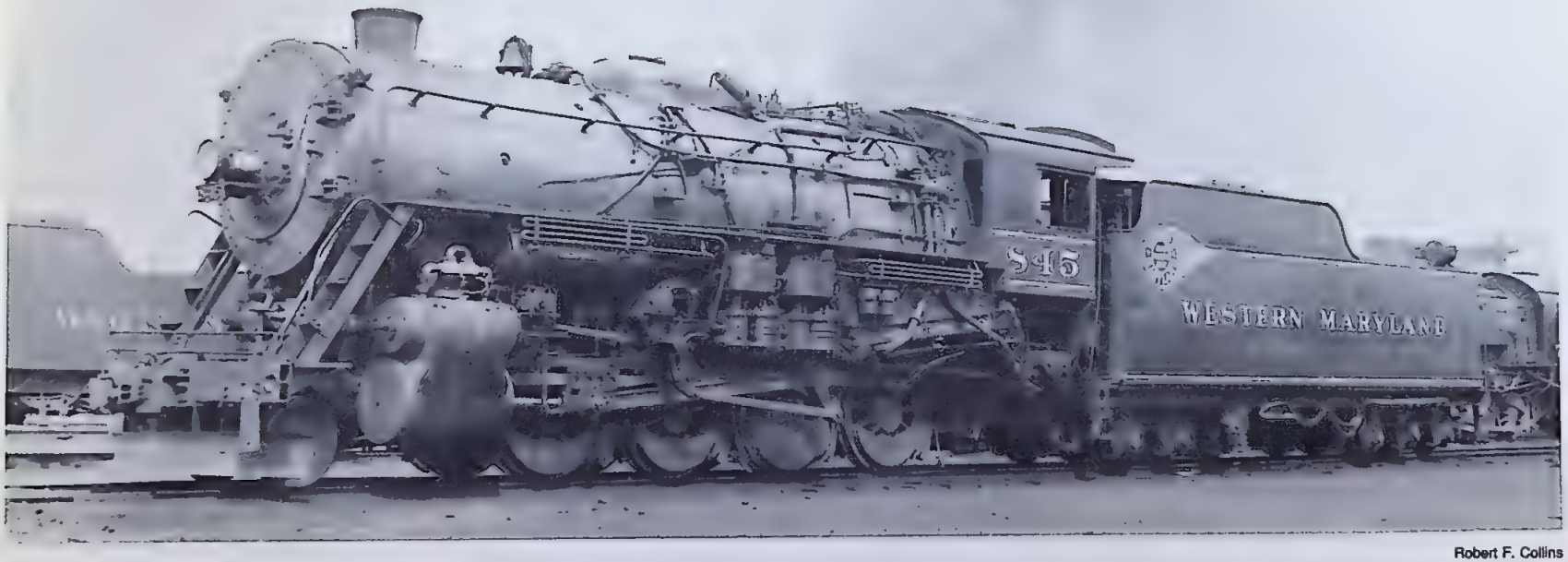
Robert F. Collins

The Western Maryland's first articulateds were ten compound 2-6-6-2's delivered by Baldwin in 1909-1910 for use on both the Blue Ridge and Sand Patch grades. Not successful enough on the road to warrant a repeat order, they were converted to 0-6-6-0's for hump service. The 955 is shown (*ABOVE*) at Hagerstown except for the amputated pony and trailing trucks, looking very much as built and preparing to exert its 74,124-pound tractive effort on the hump.

More successful were the 2-8-0's, of which some 230 in nine classes were built between 1881 and 1923. In the eyes of many, the H-9's were the greatest refinement of this wheel arrangement and were ideal engines for the type of slogging peculiar to the WM. Sporting feedwater heaters and stokers, all 50 came from Baldwin in 1921 and 1923. Utilized system wide, they were best known for their performance on coal trains up Black Fork grade.

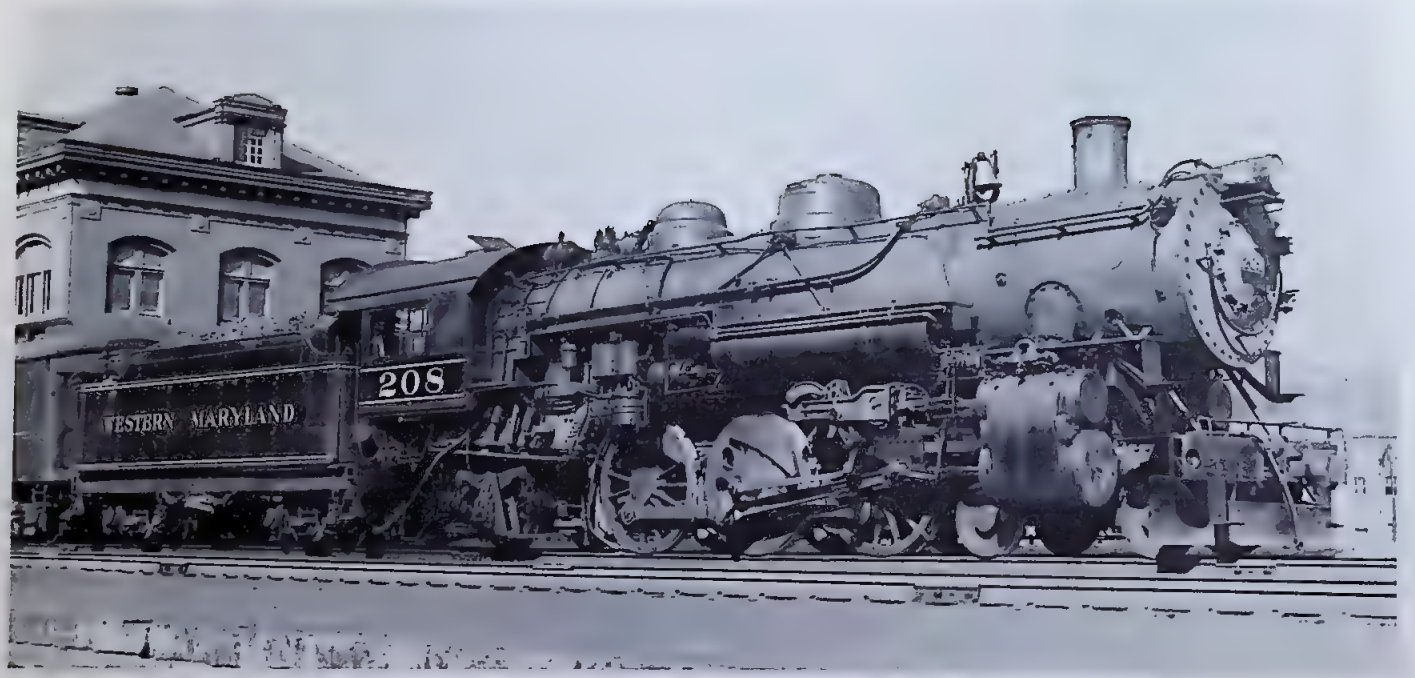
ABOVE RIGHT: The 845, one of the last ten to be built, is shown in the Elkins engine terminal.

BELOW RIGHT: On the same day, Bob Collins also photographed H-7 756, one of the older 2-8-0's constructed by Alco in 1912. Some 60,000 pounds lighter than the H-9's and developing 18,375 pounds less tractive effort, they were used between Elkins and Durbin and on mine run service where tractive effort was less of a consideration. While not as fanatically devoted to the wheel arrangement as the D&H, the WM did find the 2-8-0 very suitable for its purposes, and developed it to a high state long after most railroads had abandoned it for new construction. This was accomplished not by experimentation or exotic technology but by refining on a proven design in such a manner as to most efficiently utilize the type's full potential.



Robert F. Collins

Robert F. Collins



Robert F. Collins

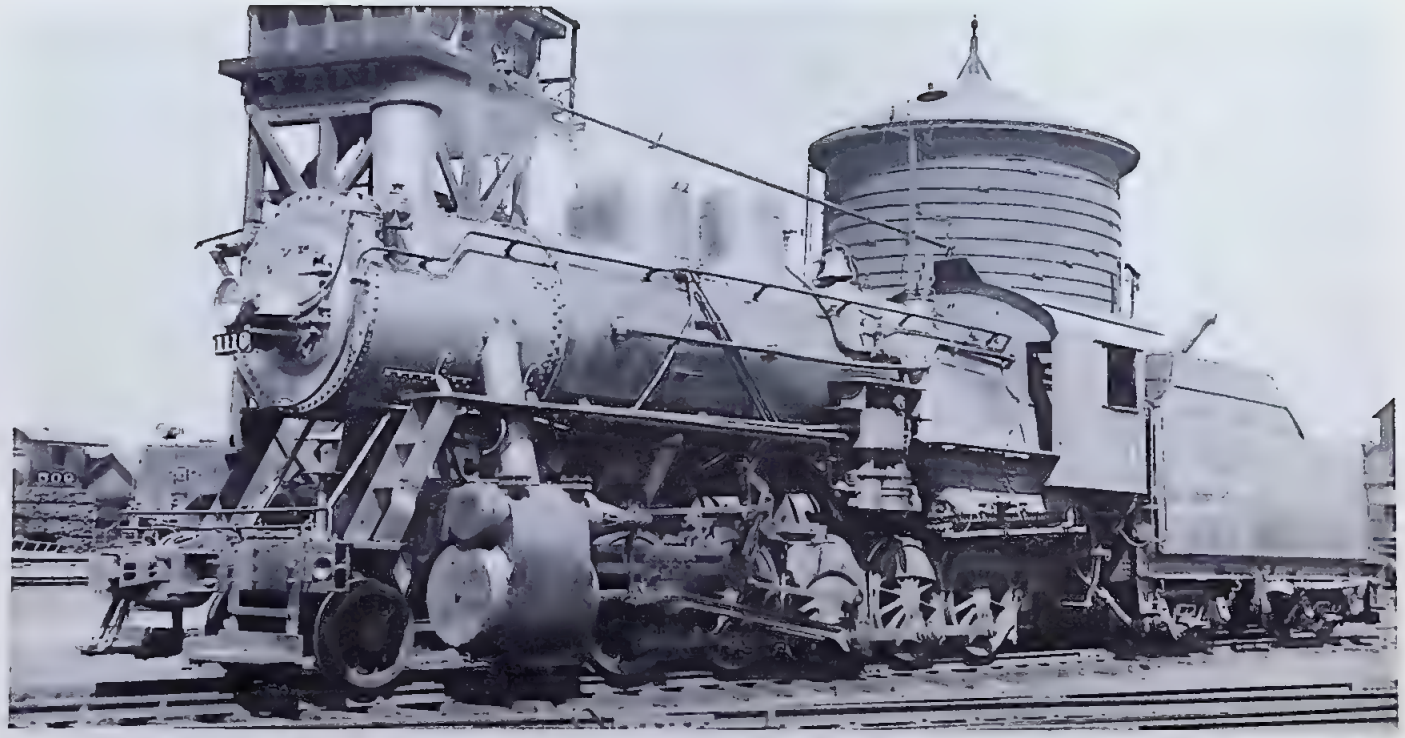
Robert F. Collins

ABOVE LEFT: The 208 was typical of the K-2 class constructed by Baldwin in 1912 and shown here at Cumberland in the early 1950's. Their 39,736 pounds tractive effort was generally adequate for the two car locals, and they maintained a reasonably good availability. Like many other WM engines, the K-2's were fitted with overfire jets to eliminate excess smoke and increase combustion efficiency; these are apparent on the firebox sides.

BELOW LEFT: Debonair 153's handsome passenger livery belied the status of the K-1's in 1941. Too light for most passenger work on the main line, the 1909 Baldwins were used largely on such assignments as the Elkins-Durbin passenger run and Baltimore-Union Bridge commuter trains. Becoming surplus to actual needs, all ten were sold to the Seaboard Air Line in 1944 with the 153 becoming SAL 879.

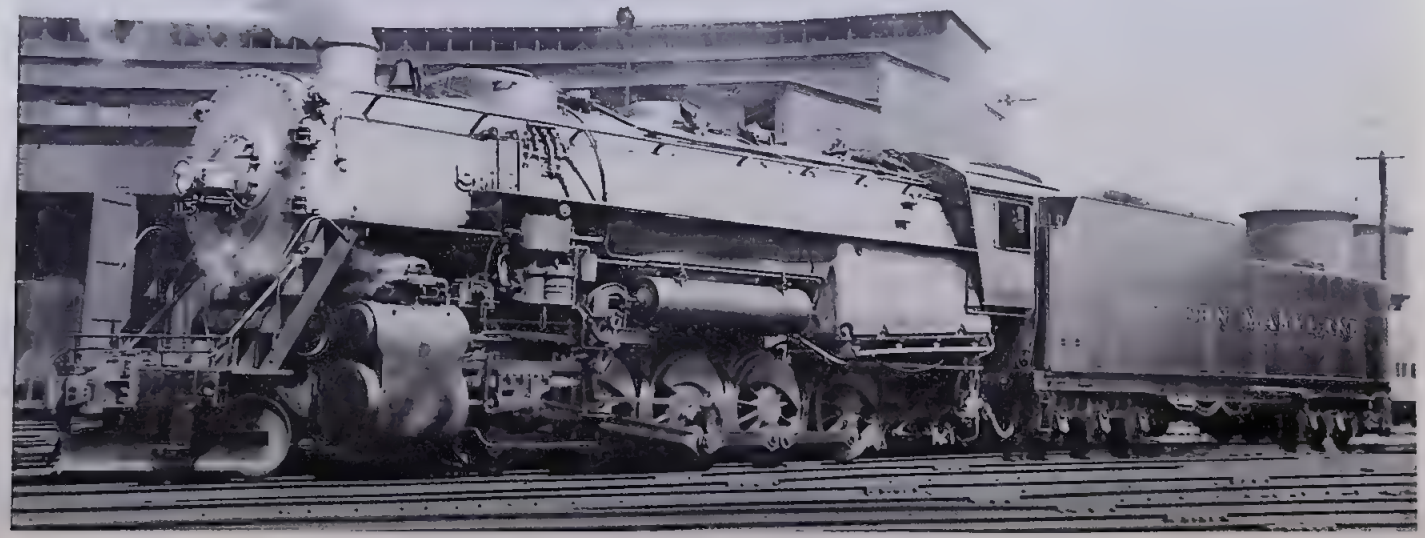
ABOVE RIGHT: The 2-10-0 came to the WM in large part because of the Russian Revolution, which resulted in the acquisition of ten of the Decapods built by Baldwin. Part of a large order for the Czarist railway system, but withheld from shipment and disposed of among a number of roads after the Bolsheviks signed a separate peace treaty with the Central Powers in 1918 at Brest-Litovsk, 1110 ended up on mine runs out of Elkins where Bob Collins caught her in 1941. Considered good steamers by their crews, they occasionally displayed a tendency to walk off the track, a result of the wide tires applied to adapt the original Russian 5 foot gauge to U.S. standard gauge; but overall they did very well and lasted in service until 1950. Built as saturated engines, they were superheated at Hagerstown shops in the late 1920's. They were used on locals, occasionally in light helper service, and worked the Lurgan subdivision quite regularly.

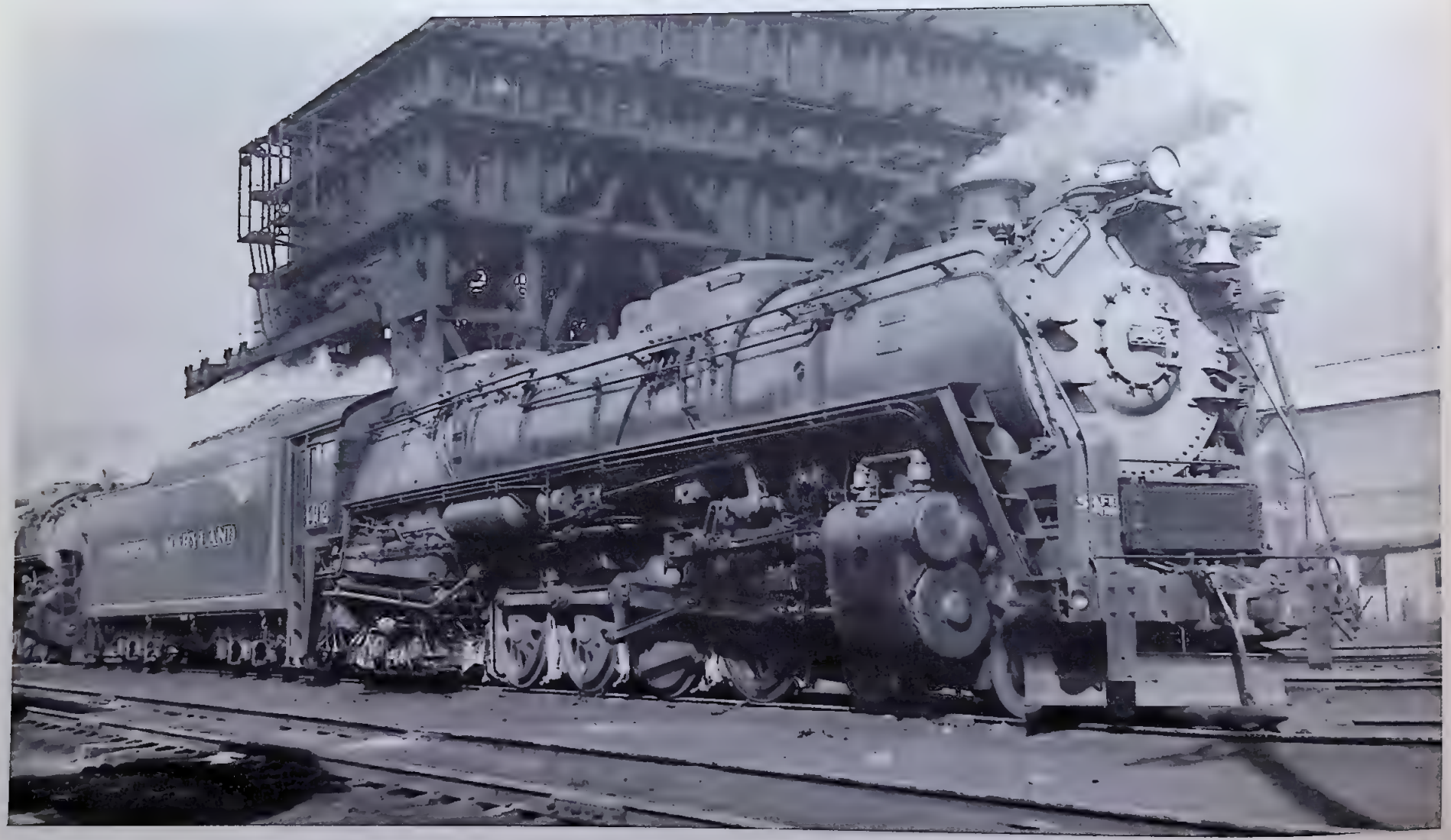
BELOW RIGHT: The thirty I-2's were quite different from the Russians, as they were custom designed to replace slow moving compounds in main line freight service. The last 2-10-0's purchased by an American railroad, they were the heaviest and most powerful of that wheel arrangement and were certainly among the most powerful of any ten coupled locomotives. Handsome, massive, and most impressive in action, they sported tenders carrying 30 tons of coal, 22,200 gallons of water, and weighed 415,900 pounds. They served variously both as helpers and as road engines between Lurgan and Connellsville. The 1125 is shown here at Cumberland in 1940, awaiting an opportunity to put its 96,300 pound tractive effort to work. The 1926 Baldwin is lettered without the winged logo that would first appear on the 1200's in 1941.



Robert F. Collins

Robert F. Collins





Robert F. Collins

The last steam locomotives received, the 12 Potomacs were teamed with Reading T-1's between Hagerstown and Rutherford, and on occasion exerted their 70,600-pounds of tractive effort as helpers on Sand Patch. Weighing in at 506,500 pounds, they were among the heaviest 4-8-4's ever built, their boiler diameter was greater than that of an N&W Y-6b Mallet. Free-steaming, fast-moving, and well-liked by their crews, they were destined to die young, all were out of service by 1954. Left in storage until 1956, when their equipment trusts ran out, there had been talk in 1955 that the B&O might lease them to supplement its T-3's, but nothing ever came of it.

ABOVE: The 1402 basks in front of the Ridgeley coal dock in 1952, looking every inch the no nonsense freight hauler its designers and builders intended.

RIGHT: The 1412, last of the line, and 1406 head a freight east from Knobmount Yard for Hagerstown. By 1952, the date of these photos, the career of the J-1's was already in its autumn, but the massive Baldwins gave no indication that they were ready to give up.

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

In this trio of Maryland Junction scenes, Bill Price caught some of the ever present action inherent in the moving of Western Maryland's tonnage east and west. *ABOVE LEFT:* The 811, sporting green flags, pulls out of Knobmount Yard bound east for Hagerstown. The WM was one of those rare roads on which scheduled freight service really meant that: genuine timecarded freights. With the symbol freights assigned schedules it was often easier to run overflow as second sections of the scheduled freight rather than as extras. *ABOVE RIGHT:* The 1403 is out of Knobley Tunnel and pulling by MY Tower at Maryland Junction, bound west for Connellsville. The fireman has already snagged the flimsies as the Potomac crosses over to continue on through Cumberland. *BELOW RIGHT:* The 1410 has the sanders running as it gets a train of classified coal moving out of Knobmount Yard bound east for Hagerstown. Switching coal may seem unnecessary to the uninitiated, but the black diamonds range over seven grades of size alone and are further distinguished by heat content, the amount of sulfur, and the suitability for coking, amongst other classifications. So the hoppers of black diamonds from the tipples of the Thomas subdivision have been sorted out at Knobmount to expedite their delivery east to their proper consignees. *OPPOSITE:* The lowering sunlight of a September afternoon accents the profile of 1409 as it leads westbound WM-3 out of Knobley Tunnel on the last lap from Hagerstown. Both the camera angle and the bright light tend to accent the incredible girth of the 4-8-4's boiler, and the clear stack indicates that the over-fire jets are performing their anti-pollution function just as intended.

William P. Price

209
208

Cumberland East

William P. Price

The superbly engineered Cumberland Extension cost just a little less than $12,000 per mile at 1906 prices and was probably worth every penny of it, even though the construction costs were cited as the principal cause of the WM's 1908 bankruptcy. One reason for this was the simple fact that much of the line is composed of either tunnels or bridges.

This is illustrated here *(LEFT)* as the 209 brings eastbound Train 2 out of Knobley Tunnel and across the North Branch of the Potomac River from West Virginia into Maryland. The weather is brisk on this Armistice Day in 1952, and the faithful K2 is sporting a proud white plume to match its well polished appearance.

RIGHT: A Potomac locomotive meets the Potomac River as 1405 brings empty hoppers west out of Welton Tunnel and across the 4-8-4's namesake river. Welton Tunnel was bored under what would become the Cumberland Municipal Airport and the bridges here and at Knobley Tunnel were just two of nine such crossings of the river between Cumberland and Williamsport. Sadly, the Chessie System discarded this part of the Western Maryland. The Welton Tunnel has been sealed off and the eastern approach filled in to allow an extension of one of the airport's runways.

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

The sweeping curve at North Branch provided an appropriate background for four portraits of the extraordinary and the commonplace over the latter days of steam.

LEFT: The 1406 works its way around a curve and past a semaphore on a spring afternoon in 1947. The 4-8-4 is fresh from the erecting halls at Eddystone, April is in the air, the sound and sight are superb.

ABOVE: The 761 has the Hagerstown-Cumberland local in tow on a less clement April day in 1952. The H-7B Consolidations were used on this run during the latter days of steam, replacing the I-1 Russian Decapods which had been standard power for a number of years.

ABOVE RIGHT: The 205 leads a Directors Special west with standard Pullmans and office cars. The occasion is the 1952 Centennial, and the special party is enroute to Cumberland for a civic celebration.

BELOW RIGHT: A few months earlier, in March of 1952, No. 2 sports office car 204 as it heads east. The private varnish's aluminum roof was a WM custom, so painted to show that it was air-conditioned.

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

FAR LEFT: With a touch of spring in the air, 1401 brings a coal train east through one of the rock cuts near Spring Gap, Maryland. Here can be seen one of the reasons for the high price tag on the Cumberland Extension. The solid rock geology of the Potomac Valley, which necessitated a number of cuts, was responsible for much of the $7,000,000 cost.

LEFT: A westbound with 1401 moves easily along on the gradeless stretch at Jerome, and basks in the admiration of a lunching track crew. In 1951 and 1952, when these scenes were photographed, steam ruled almost absolutely on the Hagerstown Division, but a few months later the burble of Alco FA's was becoming more common.

RIGHT: The 301, the first of the initial four units received, brings a train of coal east at Old Town. The first Alco power purchased since the H-7 2-8-0's in 1912, the FA's were never reordered, but a few years later a large number of RS-3's were acquired to dieselize the Elkins line.

William P. Price.

William P. Price

William P. Price

On May 7, 1952 Bill Price set up near Jerome and recorded the WM in steam against the background of a splenderous spring day.

ABOVE: First came K-2 No. 206 with the westbound passenger bound for Cumberland from Baltimore. One of four K-2's converted to oil in 1947 to reduce smoke problems in tunnels and comply with Baltimore anti-smoke ordinances, it generally was used east of Hagerstown.

LEFT: Then hard behind it, came 1412 rolling WM-3 west as fast as speed restrictions and its 69-inch drivers would let it. All are gone now; dapper Pacific and varnished green coaches, monumental Potomac and fast rolling high cars, and even the well tended tracks have been ripped up. But the river still flows and the hills grow resplendent in the spring as the season of renewal comes round.

Between Little Orleans and Paw Paw, the Potomac River cuts through the Green Ridge of the Alleghanies and Sideline Hill. In following the course of least resistance, the river describes several meanders whose existence was a major bane of early railroad, canal and road builders. By the time the Cumberland Extension was constructed, technology had advanced enough to make possible a straight, albeit expensive, right-of-way. This was accomplished although it required six steel trestles, three tunnels, and several cuts. This passage through a major natural barrier so impressed B&O President Leonor F. Loree that he ordered work begun on what was to become the B&O's Magnolia Cutoff.

In May of 1952, Train 3 is shown at one of the crossings between Green Ridge, Maryland and Jerome, West Virginia. The 203 is handling the train in a scene illustrating the trestles and cuts which characterized this section of the line.

William P. Price

Robert F. Collins

LEFT: At Williamsport, the WM leaves the Potomac heading north for Hagerstown and here begins the 6 mile Williamsport Hill. A pusher district for both steam and diesel operation, it was generally the bailiwick of I-2's and H-9's. On June 25, 1941, Bob Collins caught a brand new 1203 leading a 112 car freight up the 1.08 percent against a bucolic background which contrasted with the steepness of the grade.

BELOW: Somewhat surprisingly, 2-8-8-2 No. 908 was helping that day and the 1915 Mallet is seen exerting its 105,600 pound tractive effort against the freshly painted caboose. Twenty-five of these compounds were constructed by Lima between 1915 and 1918, and were, with the exception of the Shays, the only products of the Ohio builder on the WM roster. Driven off the mainline by the I-2's, they worked out their last days on drags over the Blue Ridge and sometimes were assigned as helpers out of Cumberland. The caboose seen here is something of a novelty, for although it was a standard Reading design that was copied by a host of eastern roads, the WM kit-built their hacks at Hagerstown with prefabricated pieces furnished by Bethlehem Steel.

Robert F. Collins

Robert F. Collins

Durbin

The 47 mile Coal and Iron Railroad was incorporated in 1899 to construct a line south from Elkins to Durbin and a connection with the Chesapeake and Ohio. It was acquired by WM in 1905 as part of the West Virginia Central merger and was operated as part of the Elkins Division. Operating through an area once notable for its lumbering, it has never had the traffic density of the line north of Elkins.

Passenger service was operated on the line during the days of steam. In June of 1941, K-1 No. 153 posed at the ornate Oxley water tank with Train 53's consist of two wooden passenger cars.

William P. Price

LEFT: By 1952 service had devolved into a mixed train and the ornate wooden passenger cars had rolled into history. Here 752, with a steel combine and a coach, awaits departure as Train 154 after the arrival of the C&O connection. This consisted of a motor car *(ABOVE RIGHT)* which operated up the Greenbrier Subdivision from Ronceverte on the C&O main line. In a scene all too typical of these operations in later days, no passengers are present as mail is unloaded at Durbin following the 1:15 p.m. arrival.

BELOW RIGHT: A decade earlier, in 1941, things had been a little more stimulating as reliable 153 posed against the background of the station and Durbin's main business district. Even at the far end of its property, the nature of Western Maryland pride is apparent as 153's boiler jacket gleams in a manner that brightens the gloomy, drizzly day.

William P. Price

Robert F. Collins

John Krause

ABOVE: Years after the abandonment of passenger service, Cass Scenic No. 4 poses beside the Durbin freight house. The day is in October 1964 as the Shay and its train are en route to Elkins to participate in the opening of the first West Virginia Forest Festival. Since Cass is but a few miles down the line, the trip was easily arranged and over the next decade, a number of Cass engines made the trip to participate in the activities.

OPPOSITE: On an Indian summer day in 1951, the 764 rolls south towards Durbin with Train 153 and a few cars for the C&O interchange. The foliage is turning, the countryside serene, and steam very much in charge in an archetypical scene of branch line operations during those golden days.

William P. Price

Elkins and

The Thomas Subdivision

Most traffic from Elkins moves north over the Thomas Subdivision and in the days of steam rides on trains 9 and 10 were described as "informative investigations of Nature as the Indians knew it" by no less an authority than David P. Morgan, Editor of *Trains.*

LEFT: Cumberland-bound No. 10 barks up the Blackwater Canyon on a 3 percent grade into an area largely untouched by the influences of the twentieth century. Comparable with the railroads of Colorado and Switzerland, the line combined little engines and big time railroading to the greater glory of both, and fortunate indeed were those who saw it in the days before dieselization removed it from the sublime to the merely incredible.

Elkins was named for one-time B&O conductor Samuel B. Elkins, who founded the West Virginia Central & Pittsburgh, and later served as Secretary of War and U.S. Senator. Elkins was best known for its importance to the Western Maryland as a hopper car repair shop and marshalling yard for coal trains. During the steam days its engine terminal was noted for both the quality and quantity of 2-8-0's based there.

ABOVE RIGHT: In this 1951 scene the 348 (ex-WVC&P 29) is shown with some of her larger sisters. Constructed in 1892 by Baldwin, 348 exerted 27,126 pounds tractive effort and weighed but 126,600 pounds.

BELOW RIGHT: By way of contrast, 779 was constructed by Alco in 1914, weighed almost twice as much, and developed 61,298 pounds tractive effort. One of twenty H-8's, its 52 inch drivers found employment on the 3 percent grades and 30° curves of the one-time Greenbrier, Cheat & Elk, where up to ten of the 2-8-0's were deployed on a single train out of Webster Springs. The front mounted air pumps were so located in order to keep their weight from causing the engine to capsize on the street railway-type curves which were and are a regular feature of operation. Regrettably, the stretch over which the H-8's operated was so isolated as to preclude photographic coverage.

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

Black Fork

The transportation of coal from mine to market has been a major source of tonnage of American railroading from the arrival of the "Stourbridge Lion" to the present, and it was the vast coal resources of Appalachia which motivated the construction of the West Virginia Central & Pittsburgh. But in order to take the coal to consumers, most of whom were north of the Potomac, the Alleghenies had to be conquered. This they did at Black Fork grade, the only practicable route but one which encompassed 10 miles of 3.05 percent grade through the Blackwater Canyon ascending to an elevation of 3057 feet (compared with 619 at Cumberland; 1926 at Elkins). The result was worthy of the Colorado Midland and in steam was not dissimilar for its curvature precluded the use of any locomotive larger than an H-9 2-8-0. And there, until the shadow of dieselization fell, the largest and most modern of the wheel arrangement contended, as Consolidations were intended to do, against tonnage and gradient, at the rate of one hog for every ten loaded hoppers.

For the first 12 miles east out of Elkins, the railroad proceeds through a valley to Montrose, where a ridge of the Alleghanies is crossed on a 2 percent grade.

LEFT: **In this October 1951 scene the helpers have been cut in at Elkins and 831 is leading a seven engine freight east through a pastoral valley with little hint of what lies ahead.**

BELOW: **The 803 and the mid-train helpers open up for the grades ahead.**

William P. Price

On a bright November day in 1952, Bill Price caught 835 leading a four engine freight into Black Fork grade near Hambleton, West Virginia, with (following page) helpers cut in at mid-train and ahead of the caboose. With valve gear notched forward and exhausts cracking, the foursome urge the 40 car train up the well maintained right-of-way. A likely explanation for the short train is that tonnage will probably be picked up at Thomas or from one of the mines near the summit. In the placement of helpers on its freights, the WM always looked for smooth operation, and so tended to cut them in mid-train as well as at the rear and front. This made for smoother train handling, and fewer busted coupler knuckles, compensations which more than made up for the additional time required to cut them in and out.

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

Developing over half-a-million pounds tractive effort, seven H-9's boost a 70 car coal train up the 3.05 percent grade of Blackwater Canyon. The helpers are grouped two on the point, three in the center, and two on the rear to avoid pulling drawbars on what is perhaps the toughest ascent of the Alleghanies anywhere, and one of the most difficult mountain crossings ever attempted by rail. As such, it ranked with the Denver and Salt Lake over Rollins Pass, the Santa Fe at Raton, the Southern at Saluda and the Rio Grande to Tennessee Pass yet it, almost alone, relied upon the 2-8-0 for power. All hail then the men and engines which almost daily did battle here in the age of steam.

In this October scene, the grim visage of the mountains is brightened by the colors of fall, but the battle is just as intense and the victory as precious. Steam, like the mountains it has battled, is in its autumn season and soon will be replaced by a new contender.

William P. Price

Robert F. Collins

LEFT: By the banks of the Blackwater River, eastbound freights paused for water at Hendricks and on some occasions picked up additional helpers. In May of 1951 the 822 pulled ahead after filling its 20,000 gallon tank, to make room for 803 at the spout. The time entailed in watering all seven engines also provided more than ample time for inspecting engines and cars; possibly this was one good reason for dieselizing the line.
RIGHT: Tanks filled and ready for the assault, 821 storms past the station at Hendricks. Helpers were occasionally added here, but in most cases it was just as simple to cut them in at the Elkins Yard.

John Krause

John Krause

John Krause

John Krause

Robert F. Collins

Beyond Blackwater Canyon, still headed upgrade for Thomas, the scenery along the road changes radically as the track passes through an area of coal tipples and miners' shacks. *LEFT:* The 763 brings a westbound train downgrade along the river at Douglas Mine in a coal patch scene typical of many found throughout Appalachia. Note that the train includes coaches for a maintenance-of-way crew. An idea of the severity of the grade headed downhill from Thomas can be gleaned from a reading of the employees' timetable, which specifies that crews of loaded trains should not only jack up the brake pipe pressure from 80 to 100 pounds, but should have every retainer in the train turned up. Even empty trains acquired a 10 pound increase on the train line and over half the retainers turned up for the descent.

On this page are three views of an eastbound heading upgrade between Coketon and Thomas. The two photos *(ABOVE)* date from March of 1952 and the bleakness of the area is accentuated sharply by the winter landscape. *RIGHT:* Robert Collins had visited this identical spot the previous May and found the rear end crew enjoying the sunshine on the back porch of the hack.

Robert F. Collins

Robert F. Collins

LEFT: Trailing a long string of empties, the 822 drops downgrade below Thomas on a pleasant day in May, 1951. The Western Maryland always made an effort, through car repair programs and the expedited return of empties to the mines, to keep its customers well supplied with cars. In this case the hoppers are returning as time freight 81.
ABOVE: Contrasting sharply with the mine runs and coal trains, the passenger operations lent a great deal of class to the traffic—for many years as they carried the mails and such passengers as wanted to ride. Here K-2 Pacific No. 203 heads upgrade on a spring day in 1951 with the consist reversed.

The Elkins line boasted two trains a day in each direction, one working out of Cumberland and the other running the full length between Elkins and Baltimore and making every stop along the way.

John Krause

John Krause

John Krause

Still climbing 161 feet to the mile (3 percent), six H-9's bring their train through the Thomas S-curve and up into the yard to cut out the three mid-train helpers. Since the grade slacks off at this point, the road engine and the pushers can easily handle the train the last few miles from Thomas to the summit at Fairfax. On these and the following pages, we will follow the progress of the train on this March day in 1952 as it passes the little used Thomas enginehouse and picks up orders at the station. Principally a coal mining town, Thomas had a small yard and at one time was the terminus for a number of local mine runs that worked the five mine branches in the area. The terminal boasted a water tank and a coal dock and was headquarters for the track supervisor.

John Krause

ABOVE: The road engine picks up orders as it pulls by Thomas station. Thomas was a busy train order office and, since this part of the Elkins Division was entered by manual block, "19" orders were vital to both safety and fluidity.
RIGHT: The mid-train helpers have been cut out and turned and are now picking up orders to run light back to Elkins. The 817 gets the first set of flimsies and then *(ABOVE, FAR RIGHT)* the second engine gets its set.
BELOW, FAR RIGHT: Thomas depot is seen here from the opposite side of the valley as the operator hands up orders to westbound time freight No. 81. A substantial red brick structure, Thomas station had a great deal of charm, housed offices for both the operating and traffic departments and as, the baggage wagons out front attest, was very much in the passenger business.

John Krause

John Krause

John Krause

John Krause

John Krause

Robert F. Collins

John Krause

LEFT: The 830 is seen heading east up the grade, just above Thomas, its image reflected in the pool of a manmade pond created to supply water for the Thomas tank. It is still winter at this relatively high altitude as the billowing plume of the exhaust of the hard working 2-8-0 indicates.

On the opposite page are several scenes from the area close to Fairfax and the summit of the Black Fork grade. *ABOVE LEFT:* The well-groomed 203 leads the two cars of eastbound Train 10 up the grade at William. At Cumberland extra cars were added and the train continued all the way to Baltimore as Train 2, making all stops. *ABOVE RIGHT:* The picturesque station at Gorman although closed as an agency station, was still well maintained in the WM tradition. The simple clapboard structure, ornamented with just the right amount of gingerbread, has a character that today's die-cut, look-alike buildings cannot even approach. *BELOW:* Though the station is closed, there is still activity at Gorman as the 847 on a local pulls an empty box from the station track along with two loads of coal from the truck dump seen at the right.

John Krause

John Krause

The track between Fairfax and Knobmount Yard followed the North Branch of the Potomac almost from its headwaters on a relatively easy grade (reaching a maximum of 1.47 percent) so operations in this area were less spectacular than those further west. Since the westbound tonnages were only a third of the eastbound, helpers were rarely required. Nonetheless the operations were not without attraction, as may be seen on these pages.

William P. Price

William P. Price

ABOVE LEFT: The 763 heads west near Gorman with a merchandise freight, while *BELOW LEFT:* Train 9 rolls west near McCoole, Maryland with two office cars trailing its regular consist.
ABOVE RIGHT: The 208 leads No. 9 across the Potomac near Pinto, Maryland with a style transcending the relative importance of its revenues to its owner.
BELOW RIGHT: The 837, with equal assurance, handles freight No. 81 through 21st Bridge, West Virginia, the trailing consist illustrating quite graphically the line's traffic mix.

William P. Price

Connellsville Subdivision

The last main line to be constructed over the Alleghenies, in many respects the best engineered and ironically the first to be abandoned, the Connellsville Extension will be forever remembered by those who knew it during the age of steam. Its 86 mile length combined the finest of engineering technology with scenery which complemented the movement of the trains over it. In fact, its last 27 miles from Confluence to Connellsville defied the best efforts of even the most devoted Western Maryland photographers and thus action scenes are rare of the line along the Youghenney River. Photographs abound of the rest of the line, and, drawing upon these, the following pages amply demonstrate its attractions.

Known officially during the day of steam as the Connellsville Subdivision of the Elkins Division it was largely abandoned in 1974 when, as part of the integration of the WM into the Chessie, all through traffic was diverted to the Baltimore and Ohio's parallel trackage. Several stretches were left intact to serve local shippers, but never again will 1205 or even her diesel successors roll gloriously over the well manicured iron near Sand Patch.

ABOVE RIGHT: The Connellsville Extension began at the Cumberland station, and it was here that a 1952 Directors Special started out to cover the line. The occasion was the WM Centennial, and it was one of the first passenger trains over the line since regular passenger service was abandoned during the World War I era. The train, consisting of the railroad's two office cars and Pullman bedroom sleepers, covered the entire line in May of that year.
BELOW RIGHT: In 1951 one of the omnipresent 2-8-0's rolls west through Cumberland on the B&O's double track main away from Viaduct Junction. On that date any thought of traffic diversion was unthinkable; the explanation is that the 757 is headed for the Cumberland & Pennsylvania and will use the Pittsburgh Division of the B&O to Mt. Savage Junction, where it will switch to the C&P to reach Mt. Savage and Frostburg. The train has backed from City Junction on the WM to Viaduct Junction on the B&O over the track at the right. After the absorption of the C&P in 1944, such operations were an almost daily occurrence.

William P. Price

William P. Price

1212

William P. Price

LEFT: Unlike the B&O's line over Sand Patch, which followed a relatively easy but longer route to Hyndman along Wills Creek, the WM's 1.75 percent grade began almost immediately west of Cumberland. In June of 1941 Challenger No. 1212 stormed through the narrows just west of town exerting all of its 95,500-pound tractive effort to move WM-3 west. The 4-6-6-4, fresh from Baldwin, has yet to be fitted with the smoke abatement equipment which appears in postwar photos of the class. Standard freight power on the Connellsville Subdivision for almost 12 years, the big articulateds never quite lived up to their potential, but who would quarrel with seeing a sight like this every day?

Robert F. Collins

ABOVE: The 209 heads Train 9 through George's Creek Junction in the narrows, bound not for Connellsville, but Elkins. Its presence here is occasioned by a derailment on the B&O at Rawlings, Md., 12 miles out of Cumberland, which blocked the parallel WM tracks. Consequently No. 9 went by way of Frostburg, thence over the C&P to Westernport where it resumed its normal route. The September 17, 1951, detour required, among other things, backing through the crossover here and running against the current of traffic to facilitate the switchover to the C&P at Frostburg.

Robert F. Collins

William P. Price

Located a little less than two miles west of the Cumberland station, G.C. Junction was a busy spot in pre-CTC days for it was here that the State Line and George's Creek Branches diverged and orders were delivered to main line freights. Wedged in the Narrows where Wills Creek has carved its way through Haystack Mountain, it was eliminated as a train order office in the mid-1950's. At one time, the defile was a train watcher's paradise, for it accommodated tracks of B&O, Western Maryland, an interurban line, and the Cumberland & Pennsylvania, as well as the pavement of the National Road (later U.S. 40).

ABOVE: The 1124, a massive I-2 Decapod, leads a 111 car coal train down into town.

BELOW LEFT: The 1209 thrusts its awesome profile by the interlocking, leading time freight No. 206 eastbound to Cumberland with acrid brakeshoe smoke so thick one can almost smell it, even in the picture.

The handing up of train orders on the fly has never lost its romance and in these two scenes the operation is shown as practised at G.C. Junction. Since most westbound freights used at least two, and possibly three, locomotives the life of an operator was never dull, and a rather complex delivery system had to be used.

RIGHT: The second engine of WM-1 picks up his flimsies as three sets remain on the stand.

FAR RIGHT: The flagman exhibits championship form in grabbing the last set. An interesting operational footnote to these scenes is that WM-1 is operating with two train crews; the regular one, whose caboose is ahead of the rear helper, and the one shown. Rather than deadhead a crew and locomotive to Connellsville, the crew and locomotive will assist the time freight to Deal, cut off, and then run light to Connellsville to pick up a train for the return to Cumberland. On a mountain railroad, why waste tractive effort?

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

In addition to the parade of merchandise freights, the Connellsville Subdivision was also utilized by the "Gray Train" which serviced a Bethlehem Steel mine near Gray, Pennsylvania. Operating over the WM from RJ Tower to Rockwood, the B&O to Coal Junction, and the former Somerset Coal Railway, the Gray Train hauled countless tons of metallurgical coal over the years after the SCR was acquired by the Western Maryland in 1915. During the steam years, H-9's handled its consist, and in these two scenes 802 is seen *(LEFT)* blasting up the Cash Valley, west of Cumberland, with a long string of empty hoppers, while 816 *(ABOVE)* brings loads down the valley for Cumberland on a well manicured double track main. The clouds of blue smoke attest to the efforts of the air brakes to hold the heavy coal train in check on the descending grade. The grade from Rockwood down to Cumberland is one of many of the WM where a 100-lb. line was carried and all retainers were turned up. The hoppers it trails will be classified at Knobmount, and then sent on their way to the blast furnaces and coke ovens of Bethlehem, Pa. and Sparrows Point, Md.

Robert F. Collins

To the dedicated chroniclers of the Western Maryland, Helmstetter's Curve is a spot forever sacred in memory, fortunately preserved eternally by the camera artistry of Bob Collins and Bill Price. Located near Corrigansville, Md., and named for the family which first settled the area, it served both as a stage for the majestic passage of trains and as the signature of its builders' engineering expertise.

On this and the following page can be seen the passage of WM-1 on a hot, misty August morning in 1952, with 1204 in the lead, 1207 cut in at mid-train, and 1118 bringing up the rear. The two 4-6-6-4's are portrayed coming out of the west end of the curve, while the Decapod is viewed from the going away position looking upgrade towards Brush Tunnel.

Robert F. Collins

Robert F. Collins

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

A few months earlier, in April of 1952, Bill Price caught the same two Challengers heading west from a location on the east side of the Cash Valley.

ABOVE: The train can be seen fighting its way through the S-curves, while *(RIGHT)* both the mid-train and rear-end helpers are viewed from the rear with Piney Mountain in the background. This point, on the railroad is roughly seven miles west of Cumberland and roughly 400 feet higher in elevation. The two routes to Sand Patch provide a case study in the changes in engineering practices over the years, as the older B&O line is five miles longer to Sand Patch, is slightly lower, and has an easier gradient on the westbound approach. The Western Maryland moved tonnage with abandon up the eastern slope of the Alleghanies, quite cognizant of the fact that almost seven times as much moved east and highly desirous of getting the empties to the interchange to save per diem. And this is just what the trio of Baldwins were doing.

William P. Price

In this July 1952 scene twilight was falling not only on a summer day, but also for the 1203 and even for the double track main. Within a year, the 4-6-6-4's will be out of service and the Connellsville Subdivision will be almost an exclusive preserve of F-7's. The I-2's will continue a little longer, faithfully pushing the freights until they themselves are vanquished. But in the meantime steam still reigns and the Cash Valley echoes to the exhausts as another manifest thunders west.

Even in their years of decline, the 1200's were impressive and well kept machines, and the lowering sun only emphasized their massive lines.

William P. Price

William P. Price

LEFT: After passing through Brush Tunnel, the line turns south along the slope of Piney Mountain to gain elevation and passes the water station at Lap. Here the 1202 with a relatively light train and a clear stack moves west at 20 miles per hour. The 22,000 gallon tanks on the 1200's enabled them to pass many of these intermediate water stops so watering will probably be taken care of at Deal. Since Lap is only 9 miles from Cumberland the tank there was used more for emergencies than anything else.

RIGHT: Winter, of course, could create emergencies and it would be interesting to know how much extra fuel and water 1203 is consuming as it leads a three engine freight through Frostburg on February 3, 1951. Mount Savage can be seen in the background at left, as the mercury hovers in the neighborhood of 10°, and the crew enjoys the relative comfort of the vestibule cab.

FAR RIGHT: In a rear view of the same train, 847's exhaust nearly frames the scene as it slogs on west. Winter photography was ofttimes nearly impossible as only on rare occasions could all the elements be properly fused. In this case, Bill Price was amply rewarded for his dedication and so indeed are we.

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

LEFT: Approaching Frostburg, 1204 is running wide open with WM-1 on a crisp November day in 1952. In this area, the railroad hugs the ridge of the Alleghenies and describes a 180° turn to head north for the summit. Thus the city itself is left below in the valley, much as Nicholson was by the Lackawanna on its great cutoff in Pennsylvania. While this style of engineering made for favoritable gradients, it did create problems for the local citizens in making use of the railroad.

Interestingly enough, Frostburg is but seven miles due west from Cumberland on the 39th degree, 40 minutes parallel, yet the rail distance is almost 16 miles, the difference being the three major horseshoe curves described by the railroad in between.

RIGHT: Frostburg marks the end of the hair-pin curves, and the track then heads north for the Mason-Dixon Line and for the summit at Deal, some 10 miles further west. A few miles east of the summit the 1200 foot Big Savage Tunnel is traversed. It was here in August of 1952 that Bill Price caught 1202 leading a westbound out of the bore. Its countenance liberally stained black and with the sweat line marking its tender water level, it would make a fascinating prototype for a model weathering project. One may bet however, with reasonable certainty, that 1202 will receive a washing down at Bowest on arrival as all ranks on the WM took pride in keeping their locomotives clean.

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

LEFT: Westbound WM-1 is still working hard as it approaches the summit at Deal already by Big Savage Tunnel with only a mile or so of the grade left to conquer. The 1208 leads *(ABOVE)* while Decapod 1118 shoves hard on the rear end *(BELOW)*

RIGHT: The 1114, throwing up a monstrous cloud of smoke, heads into the almost two mile long Deal passing track without slacking off. The station lies just ahead behind the cameras, but the WM has erected a platform past the east switch of the siding for use in handing up train orders. The obvious question is why not simply hand the orders up at the office and save the walk? The answer revolves around both a technical and a pragmatic consideration. If a train must receive an order setting up a meet at Deal it would be a technical violation of the rules to issue the order after the train had already passed the far switch. It may sound picayune, but head-on collisions have occurred over less. The practical consideration is that any train entering or leaving the siding would require the operator to pass up an order while standing on the main track. Trying to hand up an order in the midst of trackwork, especially with a little snow on the ground, is just asking to get hurt. This may be a partial answer to why railroading is so fascinating: the endless diversity of locales and their unique problems and solution. To the uniqueness of each station also must be added the pages and pages of special instructions that we find in the rule book and timetable. At first glance, their similarity to government rules and regulations is appalling, but we should always remember that the rulebook and timetables are the products of years of bitter experiences, punctuated all too frequently by fatal accidents. So it is not an exaggeration to say that the fine type of the many rules are not the idle jottings of a Philadelphia lawyer, but are quite literally written in blood.

William P. Price

1114

Robert F. Collins

The faces of summer and winter at the summit are shown in these scenes taken a mile or so apart at Deal. *LEFT:* The 831 brings the eastbound Gray Train past the train order office and water tank on an early September afternoon in 1952. The retainers have been turned up, the tank filled, and now 33 cars of coal head east for the blast furnaces of Bethlehem and Sparrows Point.
RIGHT: The 1211 blackens the winter sky as it surmounts the 0.8 percent grade at the west end of the passing siding. The 2,375 foot summit here is neither the lowest nor the highest crossing of the Alleghenies, but the exposed valley and plateau made it an unpleasant one at times like this.

William P. Price

William P. Price

William P. Price

Prior to the mid-50's the Connellsville Subdivision was protected by upper quadrant semaphores which complemented the steam locomotives perfectly. Replaced by CTC between Cumberland and Deal, they were supplanted by color lights between Deal and Connellsville.
ABOVE: The 813 brings the Gray Train east near Sand Patch at the point where the WM and B&O run almost side-by-side.
RIGHT: The 1211 descends the grade heading west near Keystone, passing a block signal which is just dropping down to the horizontal position to indicate that its block is occupied.
FAR RIGHT: In order to keep the eastbound grade at a minimum, the WM's line was located higher on the hillside than that of the B&O, which can be seen here as 1117 pounds east from Keystone with a 48 car coal train. Exerting 96,300 pounds tractive effort, the I-2's were a popular engine for this sort of assignment and remained in service for almost a year after the retirement of the 1200's.

Robert F. Collins

William P. Price

Robert F. Collins

Keystone Viaduct was an impressive structure crossing a creek, the highway, and the B&O's double track main near Meyersdale. It carried the trains of the Western Maryland for over five decades and represented the excellence which characterized the construction of the Connellsville Extension. Like nearly all of the trestles, it was designed for double tracking that never came, but towards the end of its service it bore loads far in excess of anything dreamed of by its designers.

In these two views 1121 is shown *(LEFT)* from the east end of the bridge, while 1124 with the Gray Train *(BELOW)* is portrayed in a more panoramic pose, both heading upgrade towards Deal. While many roads would erect no trespassing signs overburdened with legalese, the WM was delightfully direct with its message, "Keep Off The Bridge".

William P. Price

In late 1952 the WM's management made the decision to press rapidly towards complete dieselization, and before long the five-chime Nathan air horns were being heard with great regularity in the Alleghanies. Steam soon became the exception rather than the rule, and by the end of 1953, diesels hauled over 75% of the traffic. In July of 1954, the last steam runs occurred.

Here F-7 No. 240 leads a freight east near Meyersdale where but recently the 1200's had reigned. The cab unit was one of an order for twelve delivered in December 1952 and its livery was in keeping with that of the steam locomotives it was to replace: glossy black, gold stripes, and jaunty red logo on the flanks but polished impeccably in an era before the cost accountants discovered that dirty diesels pull just as much tonnage as clean ones. A quarter century later, and no longer the brash intruders, the WM's remaining "covered wagons" have themselves become an endangered species.

William P. Price

Salisbury Viaduct, spanning the Casselman River, its valley, and the B&O main line near Meyersdale, is a structure both photogenic and impressive. Now relegated to disuse, it is seen here in September of 1952 as 823 brings the Gray Train east during the long afternoon of steam. It is here that we take leave of the Connellsville Extension and of the railroad itself, with the symbolic coal train, powered by a massive 2-8-0, heading off towards the eternal slopes of the Alleghanies. For these are perhaps the most memorable aspects of the Western Maryland that is no more.

William P. Price

Cumberland & Pennsylvania

Chartered in 1850, the Cumberland & Pennsylvania was a subsidiary of Consolidation Coal Company for a number of years before 1944 when it became a part of the Western Maryland. At the peak of its operations, its trains ran over 76.31 miles of track and over the years hauled vast tonnages of coal from the Georges Creek Valley to connections first with the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and later with to the B&O and the Western Maryland. Its history is a long and intriguing one, but the limited space available makes it impossible to recite a complete history here.

ABOVE RIGHT: WM 1103 is shown approaching Frostburg on the C&P on April 19, 1950. The I-1 2-10-0's were assigned to service on the line shortly after its absorption, and were the standard power until they were withdrawn from service in late 1950. In this late afternoon scene, a great deal of the charm inherent in branch line railroading and in the Russian Decapods is readily apparent.

BELOW RIGHT: The C&P was noted for its homemade equipment, which ranged from locomotives to private passenger cars. Caboose 131 was not an exception and the classy four-wheel bobber, constructed at Mt. Savage shops, survived into the Western Maryland era. It was photographed by Bill Price at Corrigansville on March 13, 1945. That the Cumberland & Pennsylvania believed in advertising its services is evidenced by the sign on the bobber and the blurb*(ABOVE)*on the arch bridge that carried the C&P rails to the Eckhart Junction connection with the B&O up in the Cumberland Narrows.

William P. Price

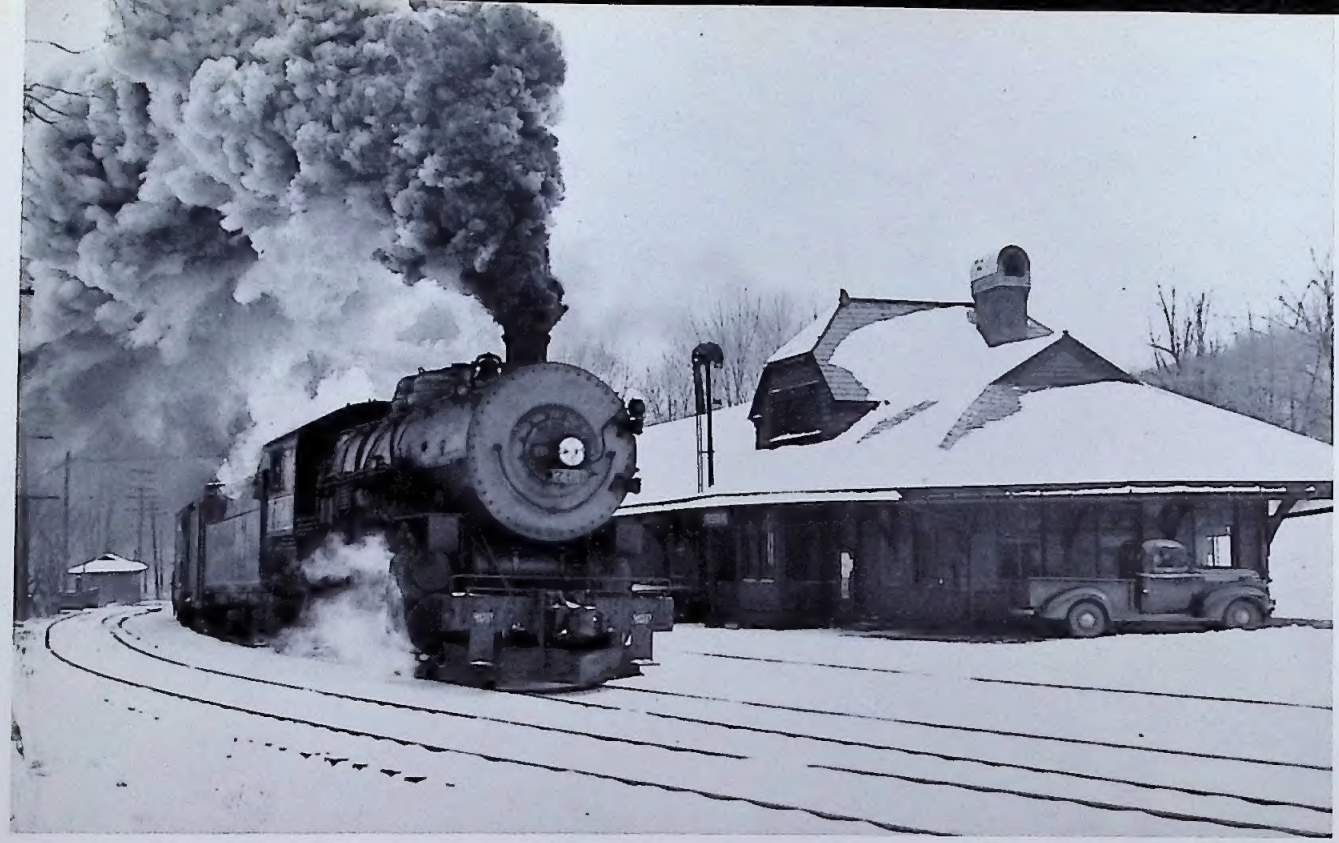
William P. Price

Robert F. Collins

Robert F. Collins

ABOVE LEFT: Typical of C&P locomotives was No. 21, constructed at Mt. Savage in 1899 and still in service in 1941. The relatively small size of the railroad's locomotives was dictated by the low clearances of the 537-foot tunnel under downtown Frostburg, a condition which caused the WM to operate the line in two segments after 1954. Demonstrating that good things come in small packages, Mt. Savage's reputation was such that it constructed engines in contract for other narrow and standard gauge carriers.

In an effort to cut the costs of passenger operations a motor car was purchased from J.G. Brill Company in 1929 to protect the two daily round trips operated over the line. In addition to passengers it also handled a substantial RPO and express business. Bob Collins caught the 101 at Mt. Savage in 1941, a little more than a year before the total abandonment of service.



William P. Price

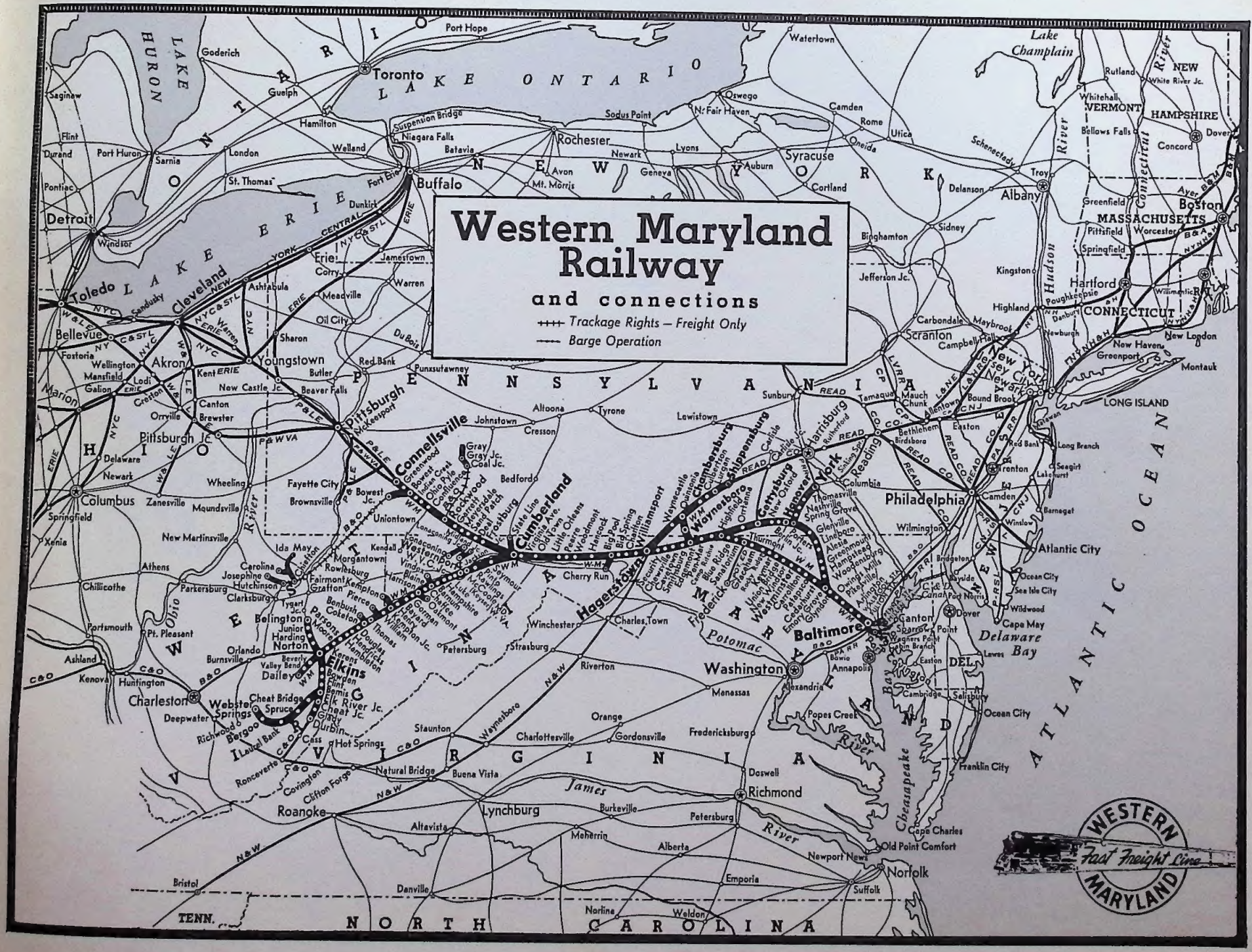
William P. Price

Frostburg, the largest on-line community, was graced with an attractive station constructed in 1888. In these two scenes, the structure is shown amidst the storms of winter and the hope of spring. *ABOVE RIGHT:* The 754 has taken over the run from Cumberland and will itself be replaced by a diesel within six months. *BELOW RIGHT:* The 1103 is seen in a view which also includes vintage automobiles, an architecturally superb station and a grade crossing sign out of railroading's heroic yesterdays.

William P. Price

After taking over the C&P, the Western Maryland replaced their locomotives with I-1 Russian Decapods like 1103. Upon their retirement in 1950, H-7 2-8-0's took over their assignments. In 1947 Bob Collins caught the 1103 and its crew at Eckhart Junction, just west of the Narrows with the bridge carrying the WM's State Line Branch in the background.

Perhaps the most unusual of all latter day WM locomotives, the I-1's were the only ones not specifically designed by the WM Mechanical Department to meet the specialized requirements of its terrain. Nonetheless, they served with distinction for over three decades, and in assignments from Baltimore to Elkins. Like the Western Maryland itself, they were intended for one use but the changing currents of history placed them in a totally different role. Both performed admirably and earned the respect of all who knew them. It is perhaps fitting that we end this journey, not with a Potomac, a 1200, or even one of the ubiquitous H-9's rolling off into the eternal sunset, but with the 1103 and her confident crew basking in the sunshine of an autumn afternoon long ago when smoke rising over the Alleghenies and Western Maryland meant not only a geographical area, but also a railroad of surpassing and enduring charm.


Western Maryland Railway
and connections
++++ Trackage Rights – Freight Only
---- Barge Operation
Toronto
Buffalo
Rochester
Syracuse
Albany
Detroit
Cleveland
Toledo
Youngstown
Akron
Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh Jct.
Columbus
Connellsville
Cumberland
Hagerstown
Shippensburg
Waynesboro
Chambersburg
Gettysburg
Hanover
York
Harrisburg
Philadelphia
Reading
Baltimore
Washington
Elkins
Belington
Charleston
Webster Springs
Richmond
Roanoke
Lynchburg
Norfolk
Scranton
Hartford
Boston
Atlantic City
Wilmington
Delaware Bay
Chesapeake Bay
LAKE ERIE
LAKE ONTARIO
LAKE HURON
Lake Champlain
ATLANTIC OCEAN
ONTARIO
NEW YORK
PENNSYLVANIA
OHIO
WEST VIRGINIA
VIRGINIA
MARYLAND
DELAWARE
NEW JERSEY
CONNECTICUT
MASSACHUSETTS
VERMONT
NEW HAMPSHIRE
LONG ISLAND
NORTH CAROLINA
TENN.
Potomac
James
Susquehanna
Hudson
Connecticut
Delaware
Ohio
Kanawha
New
Monongahela
WESTERN MARYLAND
Fast Freight Line

766

Carstens
PUBLICATIONS, INC.

ISBN 911868-37-2